

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application. Added text is indicated by underlining, and deleted text is indicated by ~~strike through~~. Changes are identified by a vertical bar in the margin.

Claim 40. (Currently Amended) A method of implementing a multi-vendor internet commerce system (MV-ICS) for efficiently enabling e-commerce through the Internet for a plurality of vendors and a plurality of consumers, the method comprising:

providing a centrally implemented multi-vendor central processing unit (MV-CPU) that acts as a shared processing location for the plurality of vendors;

providing a centrally implemented multi-vendor shared datastore (MV-SD) that acts cooperatively with the MV-CPU and serves as a shared datastore for the plurality of vendors;

providing one website hosted on at least one server, wherein the website sells products to the consumers from the plurality of vendors, wherein the MV-SD includes at least one database with detailed product descriptions sufficient to make a purchase decision for products from the plurality of vendors,

providing a universal shopping cart for a consumer to add items to purchase from different vendors,

wherein said one website allows consumers to buy products from multiple vendors without having to leave the one website to view detailed product information from different vendors and without having to enter another vendor website to add products from different vendors into the universal shopping cart; and

wherein said one website has a checkout process enabling the consumer to submit one order containing products from multiple vendors and placed in said universal shopping cart, wherein the MV-ICS has logic that takes said one order and

Application No. 09/594,213

Lorenzen et al.

Response to Office Action and Request for Reconsideration

communicates information to the vendors about any items in the one order purchased from that vendor, the amount of the purchase, and any shipping information;

wherein the checkout process enables the consumer to submit one order containing products from multiple vendors to the MV-ICS, where the multiple vendors are merchants of record, the consumer ~~and~~ can preview and then submit ~~receive~~ a single combined order form with separate, distinct invoices showing subtotals for each of the multiple vendors.